



United States Department of Agriculture

IOWA CURRENT DEVELOPMENTS



October 2013

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CLAYTON COUNTY
FARM SCENE

A Message from the: **State Conservationist**



Resource Leaders

Linda and I have been with you for just over a year now. When I came to the great state of Iowa, we knew we were returning to our Midwestern roots; however there were a lot of new faces, new partners, and different conservation challenges.

We started with a general vision for the state, and as I got to know the Iowa landscape, our passionate and dedicated staff and conservation partners, I quickly realized how capable "Team Iowa" really is.

Together we worked hard to replace adversity with opportunities. Yes, we had our share of challenges throughout the year with budgetary uncertainties, short timelines, inclement weather patterns and finally ending the FY with a government shutdown. Yet you addressed every challenge, meeting or exceeding our farm bill program delivery expectations and our statewide goals for conservation implementation. All while improving our accountability, and progressing towards a new era of Soil Health and conservation marketing.

You dug deep ... shoveled hard... and always in a professional and positive manner. The precious resources of this great state and the sustainability of our agricultural economy has benefited from your efforts ... we have made a difference together... we have become better. So I want you to know how proud I am of each and every one of you. You have once again earned your respect as resource leaders, I understand ... "Conservation is Your **Purpose** and Your **Passion!**"

Best Regards,

Jay T. Mar
State Conservationist

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Current Developments is a product of the USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service in Des Moines, Iowa, published bimonthly by the Iowa NRCS Public Affairs Staff in cooperation with NRCS and partner agency employees from across the state.

Current Developments Stories and Photos

Please submit your Current Developments story ideas and photos to State Public Affairs Specialist Laura Crowell at laura.crowell@ia.usda.gov.

Past issues can be found at www.ia.nrcs.usda.gov/intranet/currentdevelopments.html.



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What is Your EQ?: Learning Your Emotional Intelligence



NRCS and partner employees tested their own emotional intelligence during the Professional Development Conference held Aug. 19 in Ames. Dr. Celina Peerman, who discussed Emotional Intelligence, was one of two keynote speakers at the conference attended by about 120 people.

The conference planning committee used results from the employee feedback survey to help determine the agenda topics: communication, motivation and inspiration.

EQ, or emotional intelligence, is defined as the extent to which people are self-aware, can manage their emotions, can motivate themselves, express empathy for others and possess social skills. Emotional intelligence increases when you pay attention to your feelings and learn from them.

According to Dr. Peerman, there are four dimensions to EQ:

Self awareness—Your ability to understand and be aware of your feelings and moods.

Self management—Your capac-

ity to balance emotions like anxiety, fear, anger and joy, so they don't overly interfere with goals and daily work.

Social awareness—Your ability to understand how others are feeling even without being explicitly told.

Relationship management—Your ability to get along with others and to establish positive relationships.

The first step to building a higher EQ is self assessment. Dr. Peerman provided employees the following self assessment exercise. On a scale from 1-5 rate the following, with 1 (not a strength) and 5 (a strength).

- ___ 1. Associate different internal physiological cues with different emotions.
- ___ 2. Relax under pressure.
- ___ 3. Know the impact that your behavior has on others.
- ___ 4. Initiate successful resolution of conflict with others.
- ___ 5. Calm yourself quickly when angry.

___ 6. Know when you are becoming angry.

___ 7. Recognize when others are distressed.

___ 8. Build consensus with others.

___ 9. Know what senses you are currently using.

___ 10. Produce motivation during uninteresting work.

___ 11. Help others manage their emotions.

___ 12. Make others feel good.

___ 13. Identify when you experience mood shifts.

___ 14. Stay calm when you are the target of other's anger.

___ 15. Show empathy.

___ 16. Provide advice and emotional support to others as needed.

___ 17. Know when you become defensive.

___ 18. Follow your words with actions.

___ 19. Engage in intimate conversations with others.

___ 20. Accurately reflect people's feelings back to them.

Add the specific points you answered for the questions above for each of the items below. Overall EQ is all points combined. See the breakdown below for the four dimensions of EQ.

Component	Your Question	Score			
Overall EQ	ALL	___	80+	50-80	Below 50
Self Awareness	1,6,9,13 & 17	___	20+	10-20	Below 10
Self Management	2,5,10,14 & 18	___	20+	10-20	Below 10
Social Awareness	3,7,11,15 & 19	___	20+	10-20	Below 10
Relationship Management	4,8,12,16 & 20	___	20+	10-20	Below 10

Model for A Union: Knowing our Roots

When the delegates of the newly independent American colonies met in Philadelphia in 1787 to write a constitution, they took inspiration from many sources: the writings of John Locke and Jean-Jacques Rousseau and practical example of the Iroquois League, which was also known as the Iroquois Confederacy.

The original members of the Iroquois League included the Mohawk, Oneida, Onondaga, Cayuga, and Seneca nations, and is believed to have been established prior to major European contact sometime between 1450 and 1600. The Tuscarora became the sixth nation in 1720.

"We are a powerful confederacy", the Onondaga leader Canasatego had advised colonial officials back in 1744, "and by your observing the same methods our wise forefathers have taken, you will acquire a fresh strength and power." The words prompted a bright young journalist named Benjamin Franklin to make a study of the Iroquois system. Franklin

discovered a fine working example of representative democracy, with a constitution that spelled out checks and balances, rules of procedure, limits of power, and a stress on individual liberty. Deeply impressed, Franklin drew up a scheme, called the Albany Plan, for joining the Thirteen Colonies into a similar confederation.

Franklin's proposal languished for several decades. Then at Philadelphia, the delegates turned to its provisions. Much of the final Constitution thus came to reflect Iroquois ideals. So too, did an important piece of national symbolism: the American eagle. Like the majestic bird that guards the Iroquois Tree of Peace, the American eagle stands for unity and power. There is one further echo. The Iroquois eagle holds six arrows, one for each of the Six Nations; the United States eagle grasps 13 arrows, a reminder of its 13 original member states.

- Submitted by Shaun Holcomb,
American Indian / Alaska Native SEPM

Back in the Day

This issue's photo features SCS District Conservationist Martin Hintz discussing conservation and grazing plans with Harold Mayne and Roy Lumbard of Da-Sha-May Grazing Association in Ringgold County. The group is standing in a 160-acre switchgrass field, 12 miles south of Creston, they seeded for summer pasture. They built the pond in the background for water supply. (July 18, 1974, Photo by Lynn Betts)

Here's what a 1967 article from the Des Moines Register said about the association. — Da-Sha-May Grazing Association — is taken from the first letters of Daggett, Shaffer and Maynes. Their farms are located within 19 miles of the farm the association purchased. Lumbard was chosen as manager since his farm lies adjacent to it. The land is being farmed by a tenant this year. Development of the grazing unit, along with cattle handling pens and corrals, the building of fences to split the farm into five pastures and the construction of four additional farm ponds, will cost about \$15,760.



Do you have a "Back in the Day" photo you'd like published in Current Developments? Photos need to be at least 10 years old---the older, the better!

HR Corner

ALL EMPLOYEES MUST READ THE Health Insurance Marketplace Notice in order to ensure compliance with the Patient and Protection and Affordable Care Act, Public Law 111-148 and the Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act of 2010, Public Law 111-152 (collectively, the Affordable Care Act) that establishes the Health Insurance Marketplace under Section 1311(b).

The Health Insurance Marketplace does not affect the Federal Employee's Health Benefits Program (FEHB) program.

In HR's SharePoint we have posted the Health Insurance Marketplace Notice about coverage options available to everyone through the Health Insurance Marketplace. Also posted is a fact sheet Health Care Reform FEHB FastFacts that explains the requirements of the Affordable Care Act's individual shared responsibility provision and how that relates to the FEHB Program.

Visit HR's SharePoint at: <http://tinyurl.com/ky9je6j>

Furlough Unemployment: How to Cancel or Repay

Canceling Your Unemployment:

If you applied for unemployment you will need to cancel it. You can fax, email or mail the following statement:

"I am requesting to withdraw my unemployment insurance claim. I am a Federal Government Worker who was affected by the government shutdown. I have returned to work and will be receiving back pay for my furloughed period. Please cancel my application for unemployment."

Make sure to include your full name and social security number. You will need to sign and date the document.

You can email it to UIClaim-sHelp@iwd.iowa.gov or fax it to

this central number: 515-242-0498 (ATTN: FE/X).

Or you can mail it to:
UISC
Attn: Federal Claims Cancellation
PO Box 10332
Des Moines, IA 50306-0332

Repaying Your Unemployment:

If you need to repay unemployment benefits, you will receive a notification in the mail with instructions from Iowa Workforce Development.

For more information contact Iowa Workforce Development at: UIClaimsHelp@iwd.iowa.gov or call 800-850-5627 (use prompts to speak to a person)



Unlocking Secrets: Soil Health Local Promos

From field days to countertop demonstrations, many field offices and Iowa staff are finding creative and effective ways to help teach producers about the economic and agronomic benefits of soil health.

If you'd like to share how your office is helping to promote soil health through cover crops and other practices, please send your ideas to laura.crowell@ia.usda.gov and we will include them in future issues of Current Developments.

This photo was submitted by Soil Conservationist Sarah Ham in the Washington Field Office. Their display includes the sign "Why aren't you trying cover crops?"



Working Towards: Up Front Conservation Planning (UPDATE)

In support of our Upfront Conservation Planning effort, a group of planners from across Iowa are following a Continuous Performance Improvement (CPI) protocol to evaluate the state's conservation planning process to determine if how it can be improved.

Jamie Carpenter, ASTFO in Atlantic and Matt Drechsel, ASTFO in West Union, are leading team members Tina Cibula (SC, Vinton FO, Area 3), Melissa Johnson (RC, Clarinda FO, Area 4), Denis Schulte (DC, Sac City FO, Area 1), Brian Tumey (RC, Algona FO, Area 2), and Bruce Van Laere (DC, De Witt FO, Area 5). In addition, each team member is consulting local subject matter experts during various stages of the process.

To develop improvements based on facts and not assumptions, the team is following a process involving the following steps: Define, Measure, Analyze, Improve, and Control. This structured approach guides the team through the definition of a problem, identification of the root causes of the problem, determination of solutions or improvements, implementation of the solutions and maintenance of the improvements that are implemented.

As part of the Design Phase, the group developed a process map identifying how Iowa currently completes conservation planning from the time a farmer requests assistance through step four of

the nine-step planning process in the National Planning Procedures Handbook (NPPH).

After working through the process map, the group determined the first two steps were not consistently being completed. This causes some field offices to miss opportunities to identify and address resource concerns, reducing the overall amount of conservation implemented by our customers. This insight helped the team focus their efforts on pre-planning through step two of the NPPH nine-step planning process.

The team is currently working to identify the inputs and outputs of this portion of the planning pro-

cess to identify areas of variability. This will enable the team to find areas of concern within the Iowa conservation planning process.

Once the committee's findings are reviewed by a CPI expert, the group will analyze the gathered information and make conservation planning improvement recommendations to Jay Mar, Iowa state conservationist. The committee hopes to present its recommendations by January 2014. Once recommendations are adopted the group's goal is that all FY17 EQIP FA obligations be supported by a conservation plan developed following the NPPH.





Video Spotlight: Restless Tillage Syndrome

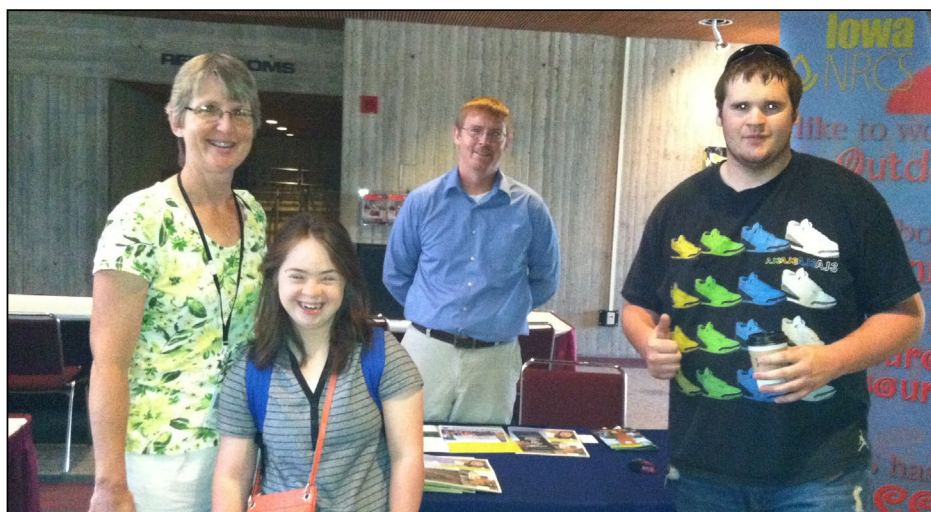
This hilarious video is produced by [Water Rocks!](http://www.waterrocks.org), a statewide youth water education campaign that fosters the interplay of knowledge, caring and engagement among Iowa's youth that can lead to long-term multigenerational transformation of all Iowans.



Feds Feed Families: Update!

We are still waiting on the garden/farm produce reported for the People's Garden coordinator in Washington DC. Until then, we can't select a winner for our pizza party.

To date, we can report there were 5,334 lbs. donated state-wide from NRCS, FSA, RD, APHIS, NASS and County Soil & Water Conservation Districts. The 5,334 lbs. includes canned goods and other non-perishables plus online donations and checks which were converted into the recommended equivalent weight of food to be purchased by the Iowa Food Bank and the Move The Food organizations.



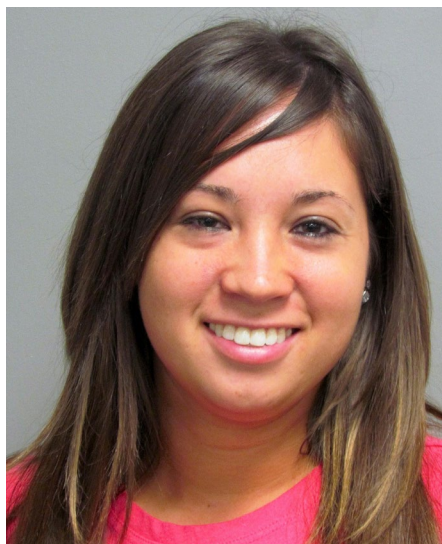
NRCS Geologist Joe Thompson, center, is visited by several Forum participants.

Resource Fair: Recognizing Future Leaders

This summer Joe Thompson, NRCS Geologist and Disabilities/Veterans Special Emphasis Program Manager attended the Iowa Youth Leadership Forum Resource Fair on the Iowa State University Campus. [The Iowa Youth Leadership Forum](#) is sponsored by the Office of Persons with Disabilities and the Department for the Blind and Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services. This year's forum was attended by 35 disabled Iowa high school students and their families. Goals of the forum in-

clude helping young people with disabilities become employed and self-sufficient, helping them become knowledgeable about resources available to them to become successful adults, and exposing them to professionals with disabilities who are recognized leaders and role models. The Resource Fair occurs on the last day of the week-long forum where professional institutions are invited to share information about their services with the students and their parents.

Employee Spotlight: Abby Berndt



This issue features Abby Berndt, a native of Missouri, who was selected as a soil conservationist in the Osceola FO effective Aug. 25.

Education:

Abby graduated in 2010 from the University of Missouri with a degree in plant sciences with an emphasis in crop management. She earned a minor in agricultural economics.

NRCS Career:

She first worked for NRCS in Ohio as a college student for two years. After graduation she joined NRCS full-time as a soil conservationist. She worked in two locations in Ohio, most recently Tiffin, before moving to Iowa NRCS.

What do you like most about your job?

Abby said she really enjoys the diversity of her daily workload.

She also enjoys being outside and talking to people.

Why did you choose NRCS?

She said she shares the same passion as our customers--she cares about natural resources and wants them to be protected properly.

Hobbies:

Abby enjoys hunting, fishing, and camping. She shared she also spends a lot of time watching hockey because both her boyfriend and her boyfriend's son play the sport.

Conservation Kudos: Farmer of the Year Award

NRCS customer Jared Herbert of Lake Park in Dickinson County was recently named the 2013 Conservation Farmer of the Year, awarded by Iowa Farm Bureau at the annual Iowa Soil and Water Conservation District Commissioners conference in Des Moines.

"This is a well-deserving recognition for Jared and his wife Mary," said Mark Schutt, district conservationist in Dickinson County. "We are very proud of his accomplishment."

Since Jared was a young man he has always had a passion for environmental consciousness and sustainable farming. He began no-till farming in 1992 and is always trying new conservation practices, like cover crops. He's planted winter rye the last three years and will soon begin using a multi-species cover crop. Over the years, he has participated in multiple EQIP contracts, the latest contract is to install three water and sediment control basins. Future plans include installing a bioreactor to protect Silver Lake.

He has hosted a Cover Crop/No-Till Field Day on his farm and is founding member of the Silver Lake Park Improvement Association. Congratulations Jared!



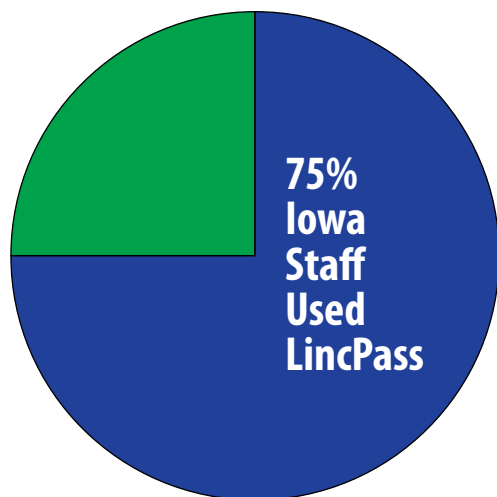
Conservation Classic: Warm-up and Winners



(LEFT): Getting a stretch in before teeing off, Lynn Betts (left), Dennis Pate (middle) and Arnie Ebner prepare for the 2013 NRCS Golf Tournament Aug. 23 at Copper Creek Golf Course in Pleasant Hill.



(RIGHT): For the second year in a row, IDALS-DSC Bureau Chief Vince Sitzmann and DNR Watershed Project Officer Kyle Ament took first place in the Iowa NRCS Golf Tournament.



LincPass Access: Get in the Habit

All LincPass holders will soon be required to use their card to login to their office computers. So make sure your LincPass is still current and that you know your password.

To date, about 75% of employees have used their LincPass to log in at least once.

This will be a requirement in the near future, so try now to get in the habit.

Changes In: DSC Personnel

In order of Effective Date

Name	Title	Nature of Action	Effective Date	Location
Shannon Rusk	Technician	New Employee	8/16/2013	Ringgold SWCD

District Office Address Change:

(No longer using PO Box)

Iowa SWCD

435 N Highland

Williamsburg, IA 52361

Changes In: NRCS Personnel

Name	Official Title	Grade	Effective Date	Nature of Action	Location
BRADLEY, KINDRA DAWN	SOIL CON TECH	07	7/28/13	PROMOTION	BURLINGTON FO
HENNIGAR, TANGELA R	OFF ASST	06	7/28/13	REASSIGNMENT	GARNER FO
MOHN, DANIEL THOMAS	SOIL CON TECH	06	7/28/13	PROMOTION	DECORAH FO
SICKELS, AARON T	SOIL CON TECH	07	7/28/13	CAREER COND APPT	OSCEOLA FO
PORTER, LANCE JAMES	SC	07	8/11/13	REASSIGNMENT	WINTERSET FO
WESTON, ANNE R	OFF ASST	06	8/11/13	REASSIGNMENT	ROCKWELL FO
BERNDT, ABBY JO	SC	07	8/25/13	REASSIGNMENT	OSCEOLA FO
BRENNECKE, DEANNA FAYE	OFF ASST	07	8/25/13	PROMOTION	LEON FO
DAVENPORT, DOUGLAS D	DC	12	8/25/13	REASSIGNMENT	CORNING FO
EISCHEID, SCOTT A	RC	11	8/25/13	REASSIGNMENT	BEDFORD FO
JOHNSON, MELISSA D	RC	11	8/25/13	PROMOTION	CLARINDA FO
MORAN, TIMOTHY K	SOIL CON TECH	07	8/25/13	REASSIGNMENT	SPENCER FO
TIMMERMAN, KATHERINE L	DC	11	8/25/13	PROMOTION	WILLIAMSBURG FO
JOHNSON, DOUGLAS S	RC	11	9/2/13	RETIREMENT VOLUNTARY	DAVENPORT FO
JUNG, JAY J	RC	11	9/6/13	RESIGNATION	NEW HAMPTON FO
GRANGE, DEANNA M	OFF ASST	07	9/8/13	CONV TO CAREER APPT	SPENCER FO
HANSON, REBECCA R	SC	07	9/8/13	REASSIGNMENT	NORTHWOOD FO
HORTON, ANTHONY JAKE	SOIL CON TECH	05	9/8/13	CONV TO CAREER COND APPT	MT AYR FO
KRAPFL, AMELIA A	OFF ASST	07	9/8/13	CAREER COND APPT	MANCHESTER FO
PEEK, JODY K	SC	09	9/8/13	REASSIGNMENT	OTTUMWA FO
BREACH, SCOTT J	OFF ASST	06	9/22/13	CONV TO CAREER COND APPT	ANKENY FO
MORAN, LOUIS	RC	09	9/22/13	REASSIGNMENT	FAIRFIELD AO
PEEK, WILLIAM DAQUAN	OFF ASST	06	9/22/13	CAREER COND APPT	FORT DODGE AO
MARQUARDT, RYAN DAVID	SOIL CON TECH	05	9/25/13	RESIGNATION	NEWTON FO
KOCH, LAVONNE	SOIL CON TECH	07	9/29/13	RETIREMENT VOLUNTARY	WESTION FO
SELKY, DANIEL G	Natrl Resource Specilst	11	10/3/13	RETIREMENT VOLUNTARY	GARNER FO
ALLGOOD, STEPHANIE J	Civil Engr	11	10/6/13	PROMOTION	OTTUMWA FO
FOSS, JASON	SOIL CON TECH	07	10/6/13	CAREER COND APPT	ANKENY FO
HOUCK, TARA	OFF ASST	06	10/6/13	CONV TO CAREER COND APPT	ATLANTIC AO
MILLER, DENISE M	OFF ASST	07	10/6/13	REASSIGNMENT	RED OAK FO
RUOPP, DOUGLAS	SC	07	10/6/13	REASSIGNMENT	MALCOM FO
TURNIPSEED-HENDERSON, VICTORIA	OFF ASST	07	10/6/13	CONV TO CAREER COND APPT	FAIRFIELD AO